GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:163
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2016
Quality of Drinking Water
Nishad Shri Ajay;Nishank Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal

Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any mechanism is in place to periodically assess the quality of drinking water and if so, the details thereof and the interval at which drinking water samples are drawn for testing;
(b) whether there are shortage of laboratories and trained staff for testing water samples and if so, the details thereof and the corrective action taken thereon along with outcome thereof; and
(c) whether any special scheme has been formulated to maintain the quality of water and restore supply of drinking water in the border, remote and backward areas in the country including Himalayan region and, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in the reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No.163 due for reply on 28.07.2016

(a) In order to streamline the mechanism of testing quality of drinking water, the Ministry has published the Uniform Drinking Water Quality Monitoring Protocol and widely distributed to all the States upto the district level. The Protocol defines parameters of testing, frequency of sampling, laboratory requirements like chemicals, glassware, manpower, space, etc. at various levels ie., the State, district, sub-division and block level laboratories. The State level laboratory shall focus on monitoring specific contaminants like heavy metals, pesticides and conduct virological examination if bacteriological contamination is very high. The District and Sub-district laboratories should monitor twice a year every source for bacteriological parameters and once a year for chemical parameters.

(b) As reported by the States into the online Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), there are 27 State level, 730 district level, 276 block level and 1,110 sub-divisional level water quality testing laboratories apart from 87 mobile water quality testing laboratories. As reported by States, in 730 district water quality testing laboratories, a total of 2,662 people have been reported working by the States as on 21/7/2016 while 1,184 people are reportedly working in block level laboratories and another 3,048 people working in sub-divisional water quality testing laboratories. Further in 87 mobile water quality testing laboratories, 424 people have been deployed for sampling and testing the quality of drinking water. In general, trained and qualified manpower for testing are lacking in some of the laboratories and therefore, the Ministry suggested the States to hire trained people from the local market following due process and pay their wages from the 3% Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance component of the centrally sponsored National Rural Drinking Water Programme.

(c) The National Rural Drinking Water Programme is applicable in the rural areas throughout the country including border, remote and backward areas in the country including Himalayan region, which aims at providing safe drinking water in adequate quantity.

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